

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-05 IO-13 /087 W

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P 211240Z OCT 77

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6835

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

USUN NEW YORK '94

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L JOHANNESBURG 2780

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, SF

SUBJECT: SOWETO SULLEN BUT QUIET AFTER CRACKDOWN

1. THE URBAN BLACK RESPONSE TO THE MASSIVE SAG CRACKDOWN IS DIFFICULT TO MEASURE BECAUSE VIRTUALLY ALL SPOKESMEN WHO ARTICULATED MOOD OF THE COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN DETAINED OR OTHERWISE SEEM TO BE UNAVAILABLE. NONETHELESS, THE MOOD OF THE MAN IN THE STREET IN SOWETO SEEMS TO BE ONE OF CONFUSION AND (AT THIS POINT) RE-PRESSED ANGER.

2. SOWETO IS BEING DESCRIBED AS QUIET BUT SULLEN. HEAVY POLICE PATROLS ARE OUT AND ROADBLOCKS AND BODY SEARCHES COMMON. THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT VIOLENT REACTION SO FAR, BUT IT IS APPARENT THAT FURTHER POLARIZATION OF ATTITUDES HAS BEEN THE FIRST RESULT. SSRG MEMBERS ARE TAKING A VERY CAUTIOUS APPROACH, KNOWING FULL WELL THE CONSEQUENCES OF BEING APPREHENDED. NONE-CONFIDENTIAL

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THE LESS, THERE ARE REPORTS OF SSRG MEMBERS GOING TO LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND ASKING FOR A COMPLETE SHUTDOWN OF ALL EDUCATION IN SOWETO YESTERDAY AND TODAY.

3. FEARS THAT BANNING AND DETAINING THE PRESENT BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS LEADERSHIP WOULD CAUSE AN IMMEDIATE OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE MAY BE UNFOUNDED BUT THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE

BIG WINNERS OVER THE PAST TWO DAYS ARE THE ANC AND PAC. THESE GROUPS HAD LARGELY BEEN OVER-SHADOWED BY NEWER MODERATE GROUPS LIKE THE COMMITTEE OF TEN AND THE BPC AND HAVE BEEN KNOWN IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY PRINCIPALLY AS THE ARCHITECTS OF TERRORISM, WHICH UNTIL NOW THE BLACK COMMUNITY HAS SHOWN LITTLE INTEREST IN. THE SAG ACTIONS HAVE CLEARED THE FIELD FOR THESE GROUPS, LEAVING FEW ALTERNATIVES. MOREOVER, AS THE BLACK MOOD HAS DARKENED THESE LAST TWO DAYS, INTEREST IN PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS HAS PROBABLY DIMINISHED TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT AND THE CRACKDOWN OF OCTOBER 19, ACCORDING TO AN SSRC MEMBER, WILL PROBABLY BEAR FRUIT IN THE FORM OF A WAVE OF NEW RECRUITS FOR ANC AND PAC ORGANIZERS.

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